

The City of Wilmington's Commitment to Affordable Housing

A 20+ Year Proven Strategy with Real Results and Accelerating Investments

Key Points:

- Affordable housing represents a **20+ year financial commitment** by the City of Wilmington, dating back to 2001.
- The city's financial **commitments to affordable housing over this time exceed \$52 Million.**
- The city's **strategic mix of four affordable housing programs** includes both home ownership and creating affordable rent opportunities.
- Today, **713 Wilmington families are homeowners** thanks to the City of Wilmington's commitment to affordable home ownership, making the dream of home ownership a reality for many who would otherwise not be able to own a home.
- The city **leverages public funds to multiply their impact many times over** in creating new affordable rent opportunities.
- City code changes are **rapidly accelerating the pace of creating new affordable housing** options by providing new incentives for the private sector to develop affordable housing stock.
- The city recognizes that affordable housing is **one critical piece of a much larger response to maintaining affordable quality of life** in Wilmington and must be paired with a shared commitment to efficient and freely accessible roads and transportation systems, convenience to services, and expanding jobs opportunities, as reflected by the city's comprehensive plan, development code, and budget priorities. The area's growth patterns require this commitment to include regional partnership, planning and collaboration.

A longstanding commitment that is bearing results

For the City of Wilmington, providing affordable housing opportunities for low-to-moderate income residents represents a 20+ year financial commitment that is bearing results.

- Since 2001, the city's financial commitment to affordable housing totals more than \$52 Million.
- This includes investments of more than \$43 Million—for an average of more than \$2 Million per year—and an additional \$9 Million already earmarked for accelerated investments in affordable housing programs.
- The city's current investments in affordable housing have yielded 1241 affordable housing opportunities, including both affordable home ownership and affordable home rentals.
- Over and above its dedicated program funds, the city has grown its general fund commitment to affordable housing nearly five-fold from 2015 to 2021, demonstrating the city's accelerating investment in affordable housing.

Making the dream of home ownership a reality

The City of Wilmington utilizes four programs to provide a mix of affordable housing options, two of which are devoted to making the dream of home ownership a reality for low-to-moderate income residents.

- Today, a total of 713 Wilmington families are homeowners because of the city's new homebuyer and owner-occupied home rehabilitation programs. This represents more than half (57%) of the affordable housing opportunities developed through the city's affordable housing investments.

- The City of Wilmington actively maintains a home loan portfolio of \$6.2 Million to support home ownership, with an additional \$4 Million ready to deploy for future home ownership loans. This will grow the city's home loan portfolio to more than \$10 Million. These funds are used to provide 0% interest loans to qualifying homebuyers. Together with down payment assistance, this makes the dream of home ownership possible for those who otherwise would not be able to receive a home loan.
- While affordable home ownership programs cost more than affordable rent programs to create an affordable home, home ownership provides an opportunity for low-to-moderate income families to create wealth and pass it on to future generations.

Leveraging public funds to provide new affordable rental options

Of the City of Wilmington's four affordable housing programs, two leverage public funds by strategically investing in projects that provide new affordable rental opportunities, which represents a very high return on investment.

- The city has provided \$3 Million in rental rehabilitation and gap financing programs, which develop new housing options with affordable rents.
- These investments have yielded 528 affordable rental housing opportunities.
- The city is actively pursuing a \$3.5 Million gap financing investment (also supported with \$1.8 Million in county funding), which represents a \$5.3 Million local investment that will be leveraged to bring a total investment of \$60 Million in affordable housing. This multiplies the local investment more than 11-times over, to create 273 affordable housing units.
- This typifies the city's longstanding strategy of leveraging public funds through private sector partnerships, and utilizing existing federal programs, to make a far more significant impact with affordable housing investments.

A new Land Development Code that makes affordable quality of life a priority

In 2021, the City of Wilmington adopted a fully rewritten Land Development Code that prioritizes the building blocks of affordable quality of life, from housing to transportation, convenient services, and employment.

- The city code allows bonus opportunities for residential projects that voluntarily provide affordable housing opportunities within their projects. In just the five months since October 2021, 57 affordable housing opportunities are already in the pipeline for approval at no cost to public funds, simply through smart adjustments in the city's development code.
- The new Land Development Code reflects the City of Wilmington's commitment to affordable quality of life, recognizing that affordable housing must also be paired with convenience to services, easy access to free and efficient transportation infrastructure, and growing employment options.